

**REMARKS**

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-19 are pending. Claims 1 and 11 are amended and claims 18 and 19 are added. Claims 1 and 11 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

**Claim for Priority**

The Examiner has acknowledged the Applicant's claim for foreign priority.

**Acknowledgement of Information Disclosure Statement**

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has acknowledged the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 23, 2004.

**Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph**

Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In order to overcome this rejection, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 11 to address the issues pointed out by the Examiner and to address minor informalities. The Examiner will note that claims 1 and 11 have been amended to positively claim elements of the invention. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103(a)**

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Regueiro (U.S. 5,638,783), and claims 1-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue et al. (U.S. 5,081971), in view of Moriya et al. (U.S. 5,988,128). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

**Amendments to Independent Claims 1 and 11**

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, independent claim 1 is amended herein to recite a combination of elements directed to an internal combustion engine, including

wherein the first port includes a first port section having a passage shape which extends substantially along the perpendicular line from the first inlet slot in an upstream direction by a predetermined length of the first port in a plan view, and wherein the first port section having the passage shape has a cross section which gradually and smoothly increases in size as it extends from the first inlet slot in the upstream direction.

In addition, independent claim 11 is amended herein to recite a combination of elements directed to an internal combustion engine,

wherein the first port includes a port section having a passage shape extending substantially along the axis of the valve stem in a plan view from the first inlet slot in an upstream direction by a predetermined passage length, and wherein the port section having the

passage shape has a cross section which gradually and smoothly increases in size as it extends from the first inlet slot in the upstream direction.

By contrast, as can be seen in Regueiro FIG. 2, Regueiro merely discloses intake passage 46 having a completely different shape.

In addition, as can be seen in Inoue et al. FIG. 6, Inoue et al. merely disclose an irregular shaped intake passage. Further, Moriya et al. FIG. 1 is mute about a port section having the passage shape has a cross section which gradually and smoothly increases in size as it extends from the first inlet slot in the upstream direction.

Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of elements as set forth in each of independent claims 1 and 10 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Regueiro alone, or by the combination of Inoue et al. and Moriya et al., at least for the reasons explained above.

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 11 are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner will note that dependent claims 18 and 19 are added to set forth additional novel features of the invention.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103(a) are respectfully requested.

**CONCLUSION**

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

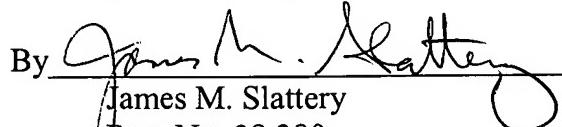
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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